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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 SAM-01 ACDA-19 IO-14 EB-11

COME-00 TRSE-00 FEA-02 /185 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARP:GQLUMSDEN,JR:VF

APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

NEA/ARP:FMDICKMAN

NEA/IRN:CNAAS

----- 064274

P R 02015Z SEP 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 196907

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IR, TC, SA

SUBJECT: SHAYKH ZAYID'S TRIP

REF: (A)TEHRAN 7176 (B) ABU DHABI 1165 (C) ABU DHABI 1016

1. AS NOTED IN REFTELS (B) AND (C), UAE PRESIDENT SHAYKH ZAYID'S RECENT VISITS TO IRAQ, TUNISIA, AND MOROCCO WERE LARGELY CEREMONIAL IN NATURE AND CAME IN RESPONSE TO LONG-STANDING INVITATIONS FROM THESE COUNTRIES. SHORTER STOP IN ALGERIA DEVELOPED LATER, BUT WAS LOGICAL IN VIEW OF VISITS TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. ZAYID WAS NOT REPEAT NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR LIBYAN VISIT, BUT WAS AT LAST MINUTE PERSUADED NOT TO CANCEL TRIPOLI AS A RESULT OF LARG REQUESTS AND UNHAPPILY FOUND HIMSELF IMMEDIATELY SANDWICHED INTO STOP-GAP MEDIATION SHUTTLE BETWEEN LIBYA AND EGYPT. TRIP TO SAUDI ARABIA WAS NOT ON ORIGINAL
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ITINERARY, BUT AS WAY WAS BEING CLEARED FOR SIGNING OF SAUDI/UAE BORDER AGREEMENT, AND AS QUID FOR PRINCE FAHD'S VISIT TO ABU DHABI, IT BECAME A NATURAL.

2. TAKEN AS A WHOLE, ZAYID'S NORTH AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST TOUR, WHICH EXTENDED FROM JULY 29 THROUGH AUGUST 20, CAN BE SEEN AS ANOTHER CASE OF UAE PRESIDENT'S PROCLIVITY TO BRING HIMSELF AND HIS HERETOFORE SECOND-RANK COUNTRY FORWARD AS FULL FLEDGED MEMBERS OF ARAB CLUB. WHILE IT HAS BEEN INTIMATED BY BOTH ARA0 AND NON-ARAB LEADERS THAT FOUNDATION OF UAE FOREIGN POLICY IS ITS PRESIDENT'S OVERBLOWN

EGO, IT IS NEVERTHELESS A FACT THAT ZAYID'S UPWARD-STRIVING HAS BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY ADOPTION OF POLICY OF DEFACTO RAPPROCHEMENT WITH ASPIRATIONS OF UAE'S LARGER NEIGHBORS--IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA--WITHOUT WHOSE COOPERATION FUTURE STABILITY OF UAE WOULD BE IN REAL DOUBT. PUTTING ASIDE OF ABU MUSA AND TUNBS DISPUTE AND SETTLEMENT OF BURAIMI AND SAUDI BORDER PROBLEMS ARE PRIME EXAMPLES OF SUBSTANCE OF THIS POLICY.

3. AS IS COMMON WITH SEVERAL ARAB STATES, HOWEVER, SUBSTANCE AND APPEARANCE IN FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS ARE AT VARIANCE. THUS, THROUGHOUT ZAYID'S RECENT TRIP WE SEE HIM--AS IS TO BE EXPECTED--ACCEPTING ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF PUBLIC REFERENCE TO QUOTE ARAB GULF UNQUOTE IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED OVER NAMES OF LEADERS OF TWO ARAB STATES. IN SEVERAL INSTANCES, SUCH AS IN BAGHDAD, THIS TENDENCY EVEN PRODUCES REFERENCES TO NEED FOR QUOTE PROTECTING AND DEFENDING ARABISM IN GULF UNQUOTE, BUT, SO FAR AS WE KNOW, DIRECT REFERENCES TO IRAN WERE AVOIDED. IN CAIRO, LESS STRIDENT WORDING SUFFICES. IN EXCHANGE FOR SUPPORT OF SADAT'S POLICIES IN MIDDLE EAST, INCLUDING DISENGAGEMENT AND FURTHER STEPS TOWARD PEACE, COMMUNIQUE ALSO SUPPORTS ZAYID'S POLICY IN PERSIAN GULF INCLUDING SIMPLY QUOTE NECESSITY OF KEEPING GULF FREE OF INTERNATIONAL STRIFE UNQUOTE.

4. WE SEE NOTHING OF UNUSUAL SIGNIFICANCE IN ABOVE PRO- NOUNCEMENTS OR THOSE OF SIMILAR VEIN MADE IN MOROCCO, TUNISIA, AND SAUDI ARABIA. IN LATTER INSTANCE, ZAYID
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VISIT MARKED BY DRAMA OF SETTLEMENT OF OLD BORDER DISPUTE, AND SOME ARAB MEDIA, SUCH AS BEIRUT WEEKLY AS-SAYYAD, LET THEMSELVES BE CARRIED AWAY WITH REPORTS THAT SAUDIS WANT RAPID SETTLEMENTS OF TERRITORIAL DISPUTES WITH UAE TO OPEN WAY FOR FORMING QUOTE MILITARY AND POLITICAL BLOCK AS COUNTERWEIGHT TO IRANIAN INFLUENCE IN SOUTH OF GULF UNQUOTE. WE THINK THESE REPORTS MISS THE MARK. ALTHOUGH

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT ARAB STATES OF PENINSULA ARE GOING TO HAVE MISGIVINGS ABOUT EXTENDED IRANIAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN SOUTH ARABIA, THEY HAVE BY AND LARGE SWALLOWED THEIR PRIDE AND ACCEPTED IT AS NECESSARY IN CHECKING LEFTIST INSURGENCY. THUS, WE FEEL SOLUTION OF SAUDI/UAЕ BORDER PROBLEM SHOULD BE WELCOME NEWS IN TEHRAN AS ELEMENT ADDING TO SECURITY AND STABILITY OF LOWER GULF AND HASTENING DAY WHEN IRANIAN TROOPS WILL BE ABLE TO RETURN HOME. WE SEE NO DANGER WHATSOEVER TO IRANIAN INTERESTS EITHER IN THIS AGREEMENT AND IN COMMUNIQUE COMING OUT OF ZAYID'S

TRIP TO SAUDI ARABIA OR IN ANY OTHER STATEMENTS MADE BY HIM DURING HIS NORTH AFRICAN/MIDDLE EAST TOUR.

5. WE CANNOT HELP BUT SUSPECT THAT KHALATBARI'S CONCERN EXPRESSED IN REFTEL (A) MAY HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED LESS BY CONCERN OVER ZAYID'S TRIP TO SAUDI ARABIA AND ELSEWHERE THAN IT WAS BY IRRITATION AT PROSPECT OF VISIT BY KING FAISAL'S SON TO TEHRAN TO ARGUE FOR OIL PRICE AND PRODUCTION POLICIES WITH WHICH IRAN DID NOT AGREE. HOWEVER, SINCE SAUDI ARABIA NOW APPEARS MORE PREPARED TO ACCEPT OPEC CONSENSUS ON PRICE AND PRODUCTION, WE BELIEVE GOI'S UNHAPPINESS WITH ZAYID AND FAISAL IN THIS INSTANCE MAY BE NEAR AN END.

6. PLEASE REPORT KALITBARI'S REACTION TO ABOVE ANALYSIS.
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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE196907
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: GQLUMSDEN,JR:VF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D740249-0637
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740985/aaaahqse.tel
Line Count: 146
Locator: TEXT ON MICROFILM, TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A)TEHRAN 7176 (B) ABU DHABI 1165 (C,) ABU DHABI 1016
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <06 MAR 2003 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> srp 971128
Subject: SHAYKH ZAYID'S TRIP
TAGS: PFOR, IR, SA, TC, (KHALATBARI, ABBAS ALI), (ZAYID, IBN SULTAN)
To: TEHRAN INFO ABU DHABI
JIDDA
KUWAIT
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005